



Press Release

**Congressman John Conyers, Jr.
Michigan, 14th District**

**Ranking Member, U.S. House Judiciary Committee
Dean, Congressional Black Caucus**

www.house.gov/judiciary_democrats/index.html

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**CONYERS ON JUSTICE DEPARTMENT INSPECTOR GENERAL STATUS REPORT:
"MORE EVIDENCE OF CIVIL LIBERTIES ABUSES"**

Today, the Justice Department's Office of Inspector General (OIG) issued a report on ongoing activities relating to potential civil liberties and civil rights abuses by the Bush Administration. The report was issued pursuant to section 1001 of the PATRIOT Act, a provision included in the original act at the insistence of Congressman John Conyers, Jr., Ranking Member of the House Judiciary Committee. Conyers issued the following statement:

"This report is yet another vindication for those of us who have raised concerns about the Administration's policies in the war on terror. Despite the Bush Administration's attempt to demonize critics of its anti-terrorism policies as advancing phantom or trivial concerns, the report demonstrates that the independent Office of Inspector General has found that many of these policies indeed warrant full investigations.

For instance:

- The OIG is reviewing the FBI's authority to issue National Security Letters under section 505 of the PATRIOT Act and to obtain business records under section 215 of the Act (page 13 of the OIG report). It is important to note that federal courts have found section 505 to be unconstitutional.
- At the request of Reps. Jerrold Nadler (D-NY), Bobby Scott (D-VA), and myself, the OIG is investigating the FBI's questioning of individuals who apparently had planned to engage in war protests at the Republican and Democratic National Conventions in 2004 (page 17 of the OIG report).
- The OIG is investigating whether FBI officials, agents, or employees witnessed any torture or other abuse of detainees at Guantanamo Bay, Abu Ghraib prison, or other facilities. The OIG also is reviewing whether the FBI retaliated against any employees who may have reported such abuse (page 18 of the OIG report).

- The Justice Department's Office of Professional Responsibility (OPR) is reviewing the role of Department lawyers in authorizing the National Security Agency to conduct domestic surveillance without court authorization (page 18 of the OIG report).
- OPR is reviewing allegations that the FBI has abused the material witness statute by holding suspects with insufficient evidence, delaying appearances before a judge, denying access to counsel, failing to provide the reason for the arrest, improperly alleging that individuals were flight risks, conducting abusive interrogations, and improperly holding judicial proceedings in secret (page 19 of the OIG report).
- The OIG is investigating FBI reporting of intelligence authority violations to the Intelligence Oversight Board (page 20 of the OIG report). The FBI has reported 108 potential violations to the IOB, including improper use of the Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA), failure to abide by FBI policy and Attorney General guidelines, and improper use of National Security Letter authorities."

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